



**DRAFT
PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

December 8, 2008

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER – 5:00 PM, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Chair Lynn Norman called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the first floor of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main Street, Auburn, WA. Committee members present were: Chair Lynn Norman and Members Rich Wagner and Nancy Backus

Staff members present included: Assistant Planning Director Kevin Snyder, Principal Planner Elizabeth Chamberlain, Principal Planner Jeff Dixon, Senior Planner Al Hicks, Senior Planner Chris Andersen, Economic Development Manager Dave Baron, Financial Planning Manager Karen Jester, Communications Manager Dana Hinman, Finance Director Shelley Coleman, and City Engineer Dennis Selle.

Audience Members included: Wayne Osborne and Nancy Wyatt.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Wagner moved to approve the minutes from the November 24, 2008 meeting as submitted; Chair Norman concurred.

Minutes approved unanimously 2-0.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Ordinance No. 6220 Budget Amendment #18

Finance Director Shelley Coleman and Financial Planning Manager Karen Jester handed out a revised amendment table and asked the committee for any questions. The only change is in regards to the Business Improvement Area (BIA) and reimbursement for expenditures by the Auburn Downtown Association (ADA). There is a fund balance and Finance is adjusting into expenditure to authorize use of the funds. Questions were asked on the structure of the BIA and ADA and how the two organizations relate. ADA administers the BIA funds.

B. Auburn Chamber of Commerce

Nancy Wyatt, President and CEO of the Auburn Chamber of Commerce provided to the committee an annual update on Tourism, Visitor Information Center and Economic Development. Included in the packet is a six page report along with another report provided by Debbie Luce, Tourism Coordinator. Ms. Wyatt asked if the committee has any questions. A question about how the small business assistance fits in. This is a partnership with the SPAC and do referrals back and forth. No request for additional funds and committee support for the report and contract.

C. Citizen's Survey Discussion

Discussion on the committee's areas of interest. Areas of clarity and areas of interests to hear back from the community. Question on the duplicate questions, trim back the number of questions. Ms. Hinman mentioned that she contacted H. Stuart Elway, with Elway Research and he will be able to assist the committee and help design questions

and answer any questions the committee has on trend data. More information directly back from the citizens rather than what is derived from the scientific/statistical methods of the survey.

Per Ms. Hinman they will not know the length of the survey (time length) until the questions are derived. Committee would like to keep the survey no longer than 15 minutes. Look at the phrasing of questions and potentially divide one question into two. Look at how citizens think infrastructure and services should be paid for. One question could be what are the greatest needs of your neighborhood. Would like to include a question regarding traffic calming devices for safety as opposed to convenience for cut through traffic. Also, incorporate a diversity question into the survey. Would like to have a sustainability question, viable action item and should the City spend money to be more green.

The Committee would like to have Mr. Elway come to a future committee meeting when questions have been formulated.

IV. ACTION

A. Resolution No. 4423 – Address Change for Single Residence

Citizen initiated request to change their address from 32204 107th PI SE to 32133 108th Ave. SE. Assistant Planning Director Kevin Snyder explained the process for an address change. The request is heard before the address committee made up of staff from various City departments. A recommendation of approval by the address committee is asking PCDC for a recommendation then City Council as the final decision maker. This request does not require a public hearing pursuant to city code.

Member Backus moved to forward Resolution No. 4423 to the City Council. Member Wagner seconded the motion. Chair Norman concurred.

Motion approved unanimously, 3-0.

B. Ordinance No. 6214 – School Impact Fees

Amendment to Auburn City Code Chapter 19.02 related to school impact fees. PCD Committee reviewed this ordinance at the November 24, 2008 meeting. Dieringer School District submitted a letter stating that they are not requesting an increase in the school impact fees for 2009.

Member Backus moved to forward Ordinance No. 6214 to the City Council. Member Wagner seconded the motion. Chair Norman concurred.

Motion approved unanimously, 3-0.

V. DISCUSSION (continued)

A. Development Code Update

Senior Planner Chris Andersen and Assistant Planning Director Kevin Snyder updated the PCDC on the development code update project. A status update was provided at the November 10, 2008 meeting. At that time the committee had two requests of staff. One is for a list of members of the ad-hoc committee and the other is to provide a briefing of code work from the group meeting. On December 3, 2008 the code work group met with 13 in attendance. A copy of the agenda and memo are provided in the packet tonight. The working group favored the table format for the development code in respect to zoning and uses. They also want to see an appropriate level of detail along with the tables. An incorporation of figures and graphics would be helpful but also need a clear distinction between examples and standards.

There was also a consensus from the group that the zoning code definitions need to be reviewed and thoroughly updated for an easier understanding of the definitions and not have the definitions include standards.

Discussion on the residential zones; a density based approach versus a minimum lot size approach. Working group felt a density approach was preferred. Two ways to look at density, gross density versus net density. Working group felt that the better approach would be gross density because that yields generally more lots. Renton and Sumner use net density, Kent and Covington use gross density. Committee asked if there is a middle ground between the two. Staff responded there could be a hybrid, for example, credit for critical areas. Discussion on using half the unbuildable area towards density. General agreement from working group that the current zoning structure is confusing and needs to be re-worked. The possibility of using the NAICS system for use tables within the zones, was discussed. The working group felt that may be too restrictive and to go back and re-work and update the current land uses. Not necessarily restrictive but may be too many choices and the lists are complex. Approaching residential zones in respect to infill development and the built out nature of existing lots or lot sizes that may make it difficult to infill based on the current lot size requirements.

Committee asked how long the PUD discussion took at the meeting. Senior Planner Andersen stated that there was not specific discussion but handed out the information and informed working group that staff will be working with committee and walking through options. Working group was asked to provide specifics on flexibility not just stating they want more flexibility.

Third discussion point on number of lots in a short plat. Would like the City to go up to nine lots. Also look at completeness review of projects; working group provided feedback on the City's process and letting applicants know when issues arise during a review. Committee asked about a "what to expect" type brochure. Assistant Director Snyder stated that staff is working on improving department forms and make the process more user friendly.

Next steps – Public Works staff working with PWC on the design standards, specifically streets. Bring back to PWC 12-15-08 and PCDC 12-22-08, if the committee meets, draft table of contents and proposed presentation format and get feedback from the committees. The working group meets again December 29, 2008 and open house will be scheduled in January 2009.

B. Residential Conversions

Staff stated that the explanatory memorandum was purposefully lengthy to get information out to the Committee. Staff from Public Works and Planning have met and discussed various options that are summarized in the staff memorandum. Goals of the code revision effort from the staff memorandum have been reviewed.

The Committee asked for clarification regarding the issue of discretion. Staff explained that there is interest in the possibility of discretion for the Directors, but how it actually gets applied is yet to be determined.

Staff discussed that there is concern in keeping the structural integrity of the house proposed for conversion and that the regulations are not intended to support tear down and rebuild of new structures. Staff discussed the idea of tailoring the regulations based on whether the structure is zoned for residential oriented or commercial oriented uses.

Committee asked for clarification that the proposed code amendments would not apply to residential, but only Residential Office or other commercial oriented zones. Staff

discussed that the intent language can be used to highlight this distinction. Staff explained that the goals of the revision effort will ultimately be reflected in the intent statement.

The Committee discussed landscaping requirements should provide for clear views of structures and associated uses. The Committee discussed that whatever landscaping is used there should be a requirement for it to be well-maintained to provide code enforcement with the opportunity to ensure compliance. The Committee discussed that there needs to be balance in the regulations as they do not want staff to be "counting flower pots", but rather that there be options for landscaping, that it be in the character of the neighborhood and be well-maintained. The Committee discussed that the code should specify a preference for the use of drought resistant landscaping.

The Committee discussed that if there is no prohibition for on-street parking that at least one space should be provided. The Committee noted that a message should be sent that you are allowed on-street parking but not continuously. The Committee noted that it would not want to have the majority of the parking requirement met by on-street parking. The Committee discussed that it may be appropriate to limit the maximum number of on-street parking spaces that meets code requirements to one. Also, that pervious pavement should be considered and prioritized.

The Committee asked for clarification as to what was meant by lower threshold development as it relates to alley access. Staff explained that there is a distinction between more intensive land uses that access alleys that may require alley improvements versus lower threshold land uses that do not create as much impact. Staff discussed that there is a need for sensitivity in the City's engineering design standards to these types of lower threshold projects.

Staff discussed the potential for having a threshold for exempting projects that are below a certain square footage (e.g. 5,000 square feet) from the City's stormwater requirements. Staff noted that the issue of how this might affect the City's NPDES II permit requirements, needs to be studied.

Staff discussed the potential for exemptions from some of the City's improvement requirements (e.g. street half-width improvements). Staff noted that they are trying to balance meeting City's needs and goals with keeping the cost and complexity of the conversions as low as possible.

The Committee asked where the RO zone lands are located. Staff noted that RO zoned lands are primarily located on the valley floor. Staff noted that there are certain areas where there are partial improvements (e.g. curb, gutter) but not always sidewalks.

The Committee noted that the code needs to be clear that alleys should not be used for long-term loading and unloading. The Committee noted that there may be a need to have this activity in alleys time regulated, that signage should be installed to notify and inform and that the business owner should be responsible. Staff responded that conditions of approval including signage that provides enough code enforcement authority could be incorporated into the code revisions.

The Committee expressed concern with the idea of potentially reducing traffic impact fees. Staff discussed the possibility of coming up with different land use classifications that might apply.

The Committee discussed whether or not there should be a capping of the types of land uses allowed through the residential conversion process to control traffic impacts.

The Committee asked that staff research identifying potential types of land uses that would be allowed through the conversion process.

Councilmember Norman noted that she is okay with a flat fee traffic impact if there are thresholds to know when this might apply. The Committee asked for more information on potential repercussions and detailed information from implementing this type of program.

The Committee discussed complying with stormwater requirements and how they can be a huge stumbling block for conversions. Staff is conducting research to determine what the City can legally do to create flexibility. Staff discussed the idea of an expedited plan review process for conversions with exceptions as noted in the staff memorandum

The Committee discussed the need for a clear and descriptive hand out for clients to guide them through the process efficiently and effectively.

Staff discussed the idea of having a pre-application conference meeting where the first hour is free.

Next Steps – Staff will conduct additional research and come back with proposed code revisions in January 2009.

VI. INFORMATION

A. Director's Official Decisions and Report

Flood plain moratorium public information meeting on Wednesday December 10. Notices were mailed to property owners within the existing flood plain and in the proposed FEMA flood plain. About 900 addresses were notified. Not a lot of response yet to the mailing and notices. Meeting attendees will be given information on the flood plain by staff.

PCDC Status Matrix

Changed the meeting with Parks Board to the second meeting in January. Health Care overlay district has been postponed to January 12. Universal playground will be back to committee in January. Committee would like to move this forward as quickly as possible.

Committee had additional discussion on citizen survey. Discussion about ensuring the questions aren't asked in a leading manner.

Member Wagner asked about Item 2, on Auburn Way South development plan, Tribe is sensitive about items being listed on agenda. Will discuss with Mayor.

A question from Member Wagner on item 4, on loading zone and relation to hospital. Ms. Chamberlain explained the hospital has its own drop off in a circular area.

Item 6 on the Multi Family tax rate, listed as TBD. Waiting for the Legislature and working with Legal Department. Member Wagner would like to see specific time table, such as the first quarter of 2009.

Council Member Backus also asked about the loading zone and affect on Auburn Professional Plaza. Ms. Chamberlain explained plans for on site surface parking and loading zones in the vicinity of the project. There was discussion about coordinating with PW Department on loading zones.

Assistant Planning Director Snyder announced that the City has filled position of the Building Division Manager, Rick Hopkins will start on December 29, 2008. He was previously with Bend, OR and Richland, WA. Ms. Chamberlain announced that the City has also recently filled the Planner position by offering the job to Stuart Wagner who hails most recently from Oak Grove, CA. He will start on January 5, 2008.

B. Information

- Floodplain moratorium public information meeting on Wednesday, December 10th at 6:30 p.m.

VII. ADJOURNMENT Concluded at 7:08 pm.